CLAIMS

1. An information processing system comprising:

a license server providing a license for utilizing content; and

5   a terminal requesting the license from the license server, obtaining the license, and utilizing the content based on the license,

wherein one of the license server and the terminal includes:

10   duplicate-license determination means for determining whether or not the license requested by the terminal from the license server duplicates a license already held by the terminal, and

wherein the terminal includes:

15   license-duplication reporting means for reporting license duplication indicating that the license requested by the terminal from the license server duplicates a license already held by the terminal according to the determination result by the duplicate-license determination means.

20 2. An information processing apparatus for requesting a license from a license server providing the license for utilizing content, obtaining the license, and utilizing the content based on the license, comprising:

duplicate-license determination means for determining

25 whether or not a license requested from the license server

duplicates an already available license; and

 license-duplication reporting means for reporting

license duplication indicating that the license requested

from the license server duplicates an already available

5 license according to the determination result by the

duplicate-license determination means.

3. The information processing apparatus according to claim

2, further comprising:

 purchase-requesting means for requesting a purchase of

10 the license from the license server according to an

operation of a user,

 wherein the duplicate-license determination means

determines whether or not the license to be purchased

duplicates an already available license after or before the

15 purchase-requesting means requests a purchase of the license

from the license server.

4. The information processing apparatus according to claim

2, further comprising:

 confirming means for confirming whether or not a

20 license which duplicates an already available license is

purchased when license duplication is reported by the

license-duplication reporting means.

5. The information processing apparatus according to claim

2, further comprising:

25 license-identification-information acquiring means for

acquiring license identification information of a license

required to utilize content from the license server; and

license-list storage means for storing a license list

of licenses already purchased,

5   wherein the duplicate-license determination means

determines whether or not a license requested from the

license server duplicates an already available license by

comparing the license identification information acquired by

the license-identification-information acquiring means with

10   the license list stored by the license-list storage means.

6.   A method for processing information for requesting a

license from a license server providing the license for

utilizing content, obtaining the license, and utilizing the

content based on the license, the method comprising:

15   a duplicate-license determination step of determining

whether or not a license requested from the license server

duplicates an already available license; and

a license-duplication reporting step of reporting

license duplication indicating that the license requested

20   from the license server duplicates an already available

license according to the determination result in the

duplicate-license determination step.

7.   A computer-executable program for processing information

for requesting a license from a license server providing the

25   license for utilizing content, obtaining the license, and

utilizing the content based on the license, the program

comprising:

a duplicate-license determination step of determining

whether or not a license requested from the license server

5   duplicates an already available license; and

a license-duplication reporting step of reporting

license duplication indicating that the license requested

from the license server duplicates an already available

license according to the determination result in the

10 duplicate-license determination step.

8.   A recording medium recording a computer-executable

program for processing information for requesting a license

from a license server providing the license for utilizing

content, obtaining the license, and utilizing the content

15 based on the license, the program comprising:

a duplicate-license determination step of determining

whether or not a license requested from the license server

duplicates an already available license; and

a license-duplication reporting step of reporting

20 license duplication indicating that the license requested

from the license server duplicates an already available

license according to the determination result in the

duplicate-license determination step.

9.   An information processing apparatus for requesting a

25 license from a license server providing the license for

utilizing content, obtaining the license, and utilizing the
content based on the license, the information processing
system comprising:

determination-result receiving means for receiving from

5   the license server a result of determination as to whether
or not a license requested from the license server
duplicates an already available license; and

license-duplication reporting means for reporting
license duplication indicating that the license requested

10   from the license server duplicates an already available
license according to the result of determination as to
license duplication received by the determination-result
receiving means.

10.   The information processing apparatus according to claim

15   9, further comprising:

confirming means for confirming whether or not a
license which duplicates an already available license is
purchased when license duplication is reported by the
license-duplication reporting means.

20   11.   The information processing apparatus according to claim
9, further comprising:

content-identification-information sending means for
sending to the license server content identification
information for identifying the content to be utilized,

25   wherein the determination-result receiving means

receives from the license server a result of determination

as to whether or not the license required to utilize the

content identified with the content identification

information sent by the content-identification-information

5   sending means duplicates an already available license.

12. A method for processing information for requesting a

license from a license server providing the license for

utilizing content, obtaining the license, and utilizing the

content based on the license, the method comprising:

10   a determination-result receiving step of receiving from

the license server a result of determination as to whether

or not the license requested from the license server

duplicates an already available license; and

         a license-duplication reporting step of reporting

15   license duplication indicating that the license requested

from the license server duplicates an already available

license according to the result of determination as to

license duplication received in the determination-result

receiving step.

20   13. A computer-executable program for processing

information for requesting a license from a license server

providing the license for utilizing content, obtaining the

license, and utilizing the content based on the license, the

program comprising:

25   a determination-result receiving step of receiving from

the license server a result of determination as to whether

or not the license requested from the license server

duplicates an already available license; and

    a license-duplication reporting step of reporting

5   license duplication indicating that the license requested

from the license server duplicates an already available

license according to the result of determination as to

license duplication received in the determination-result

receiving step.

10 14. A recording medium recording a computer-executable

program for processing information for requesting a license

from a license server providing the license for utilizing

content, obtaining the license, and utilizing the content

based on the license, the program comprising:

15   a determination-result receiving step of receiving from

the license server a result of determination as to whether

or not the license requested from the license server

duplicates an already available license; and

    a license-duplication reporting step of reporting

20 license duplication indicating that the license requested

from the license server duplicates an already available

license according to the result of determination as to

license duplication received in the determination-result

receiving step.

25 15. An information processing apparatus for providing a

license for utilizing content in response to a request by a
terminal utilizing the content, comprising:

    query means for making an inquiry about licenses
already held by the terminal;

5   duplicate-license determination means for determining
whether or not the license requested by the terminal
duplicates a license already held by the terminal; and

    determination-result sending means for sending a
determination result by the duplicate-license determination

10 means to the terminal.

    16. The information processing apparatus according to claim
15, further comprising:

    license-information storage means for storing
information about the license provided to the terminal,

15   wherein the query means asks the license-information
storage means for licenses already held by the terminal.

    17. The information processing apparatus according to claim
15, wherein the query means asks a management server
managing information about the license provided to the

20 terminal for licenses already held by the terminal.

    18. The information processing apparatus according to claim
15, wherein, when the duplicate-license determination means
determines that the license requested by the terminal
duplicates a license already held by the terminal and when a

25 message confirming purchase of the license that duplicates

the license already held by the terminal is sent from the terminal, the license requested by the terminal is provided to the terminal.

19.   A method for processing information for providing a
5   license for utilizing content in response to a request by a terminal utilizing the content, the method comprising:

a query step of making an inquiry about licenses already held by the terminal;

a duplicate-license determination step of determining
10   whether or not the license requested by the terminal duplicates a license already held by the terminal; and

a determination-result sending step of sending a determination result in the duplicate-license determination step to the terminal.

15   20.   A computer-executable program for processing information for providing a license for utilizing content in response to a request by a terminal utilizing the content, the program comprising:

a query step of making an inquiry about licenses
20   already held by the terminal;

a duplicate-license determination step of determining whether or not the license requested by the terminal duplicates a license already held by the terminal; and

a determination-result sending step of sending a
25   determination result in the duplicate-license determination

step to the terminal.

21. A recording medium recording a computer-executable program for processing information for providing a license for utilizing content in response to a request by a terminal

5 utilizing the content, the program comprising:

a query step of making an inquiry about licenses already held by the terminal;

a duplicate-license determination step of determining whether or not the license requested by the terminal

10 duplicates a license already held by the terminal; and

a determination-result sending step of sending a determination result in the duplicate-license determination step to the terminal.